Amendments to the Claims

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the polymerization is initiated with an anionic initiator.

3. (Original) A process as specified in claim 2 wherein the anionic initiator is an alkyl lithium compound.

4. (Cancelled)

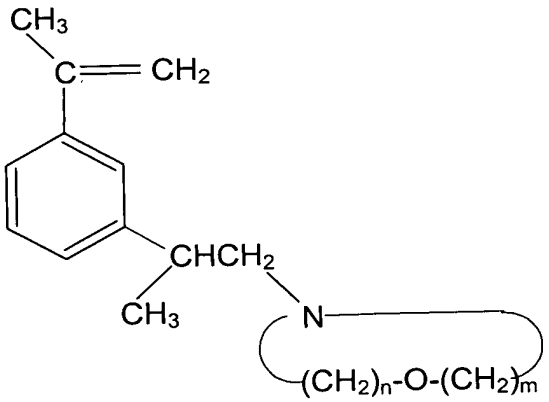
5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

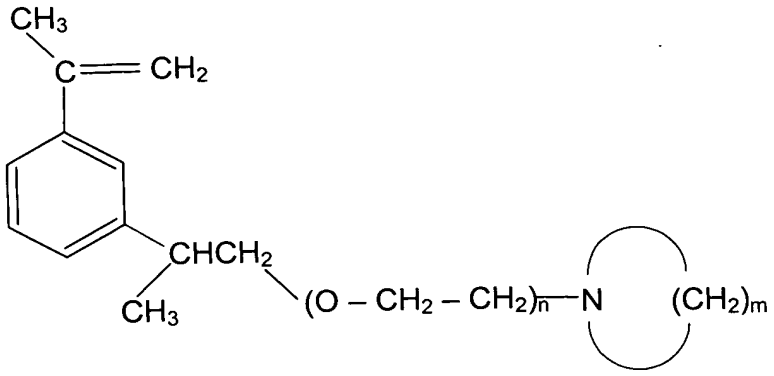
7. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the polymerization is conducted in an inert organic solvent.

8. (Original) A process as specified in claim 3 wherein the alkyl lithium compound is n-butyl lithium.

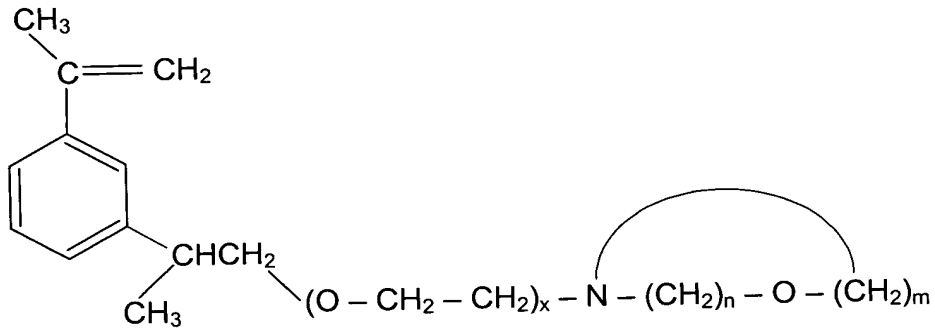
9. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the functionalized monomer is of the formula:



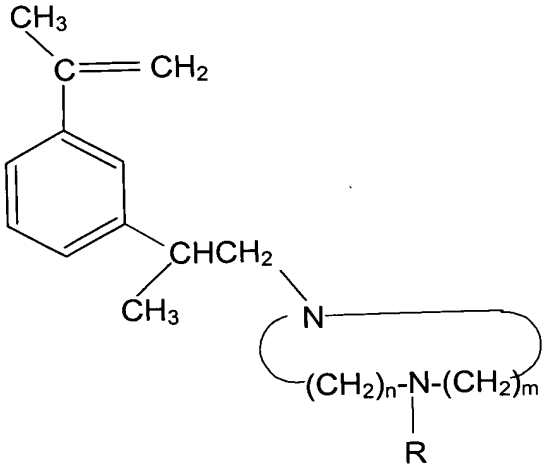
10. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the functionalized monomer is of the formula:



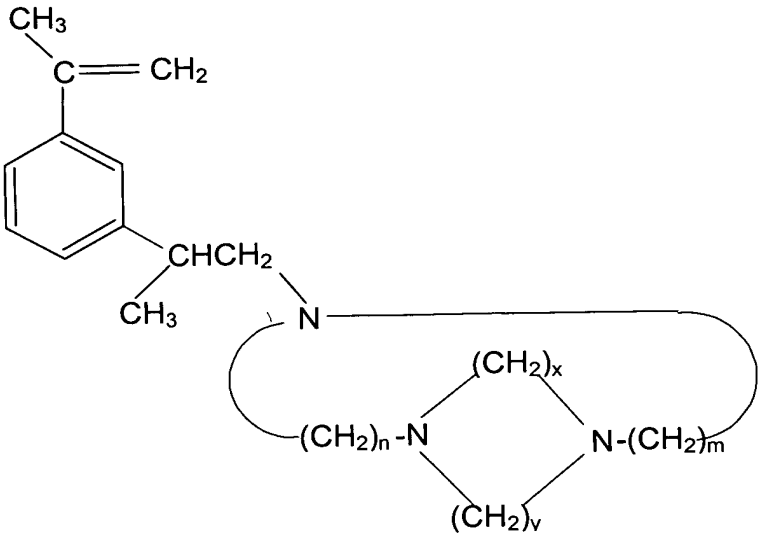
11. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the functionalized monomer is of the formula:



12. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the functionalized monomer is of the formula:



13. (Currently amended) A process as specified in claim [[1]] 19 wherein the functionalized monomer is of the formula:



14. (Original) A process as specified in claim 10 wherein m represents the integer 4.

15. (Original) A process as specified in claim 10 wherein m represents the integer 6.

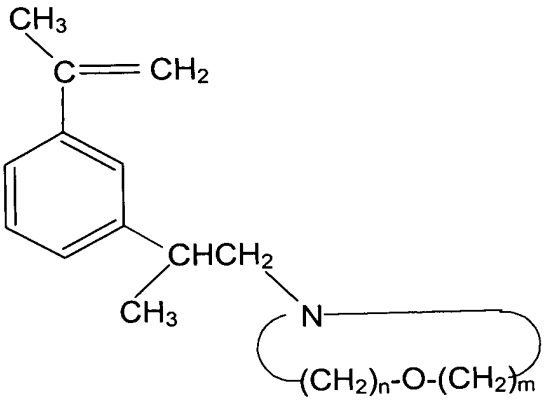
16. (Original) A process as specified in claim 10 wherein n represents the integer 1.

17. (Original) A process as specified in claim 10 wherein n represents the integer 2.

18. (Original) A process as specified in claim 10 wherein n represents the integer 3.

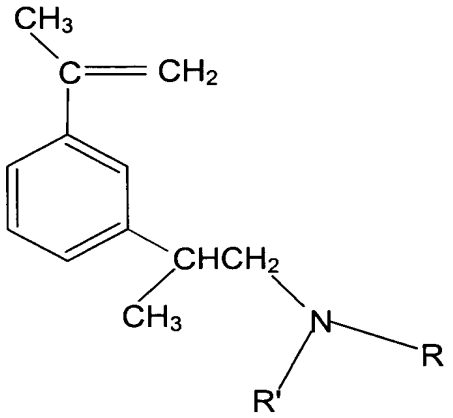
19. (New) A process for synthesizing a rubbery polymer that comprises copolymerizing at least one conjugated diolefin monomer and at least one functionalized monomer in an organic solvent at a temperature which is within the range of 20°C to about 100°C, wherein the polymerization is initiated with an anionic initiator, wherein the polymerization is conducted in the presence of an alkali alkoxide, and wherein the functionalized monomer has a structural formula selected from the group consisting of

(a)



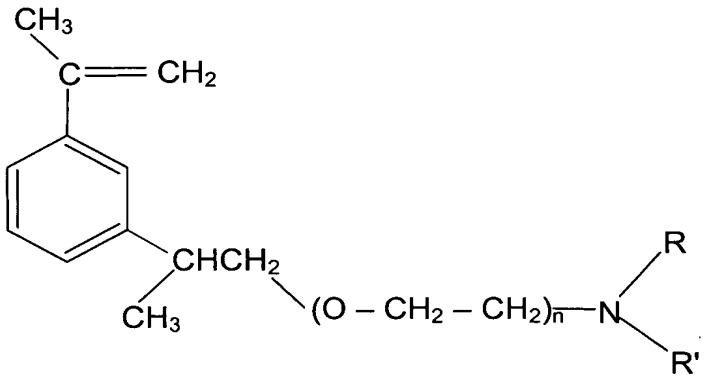
wherein n represents an integer from 0 to about 10 and wherein m represents an integer from 0 to about 10, with the proviso that the sum of n and m is at least 4;

(b)



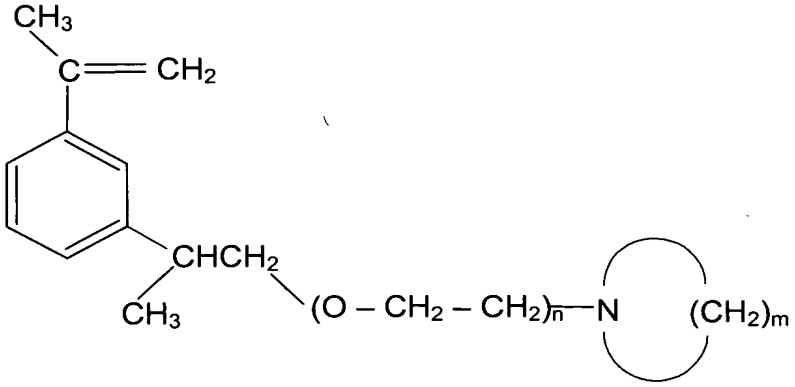
wherein R and R' can be the same or different and represent allyl groups or alkoxy groups containing from about 1 to about 10 carbon atoms;

(c)

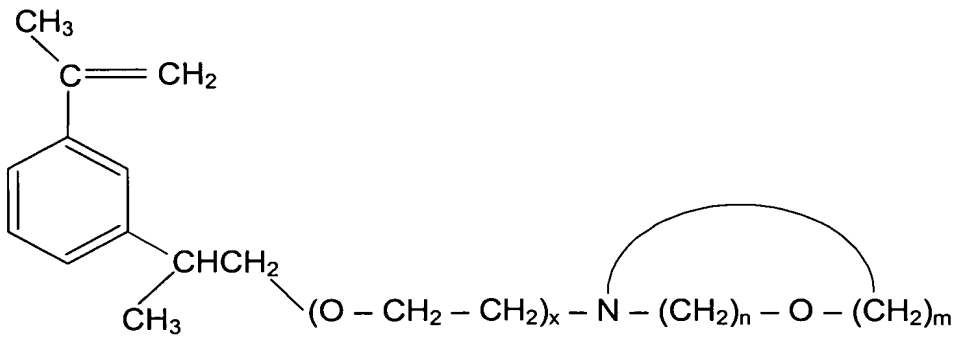


wherein n represents an integer from 1 to about 10, and wherein R and R' can be the same or different and represent alkyl groups containing from about 1 to about 10 carbon atoms;

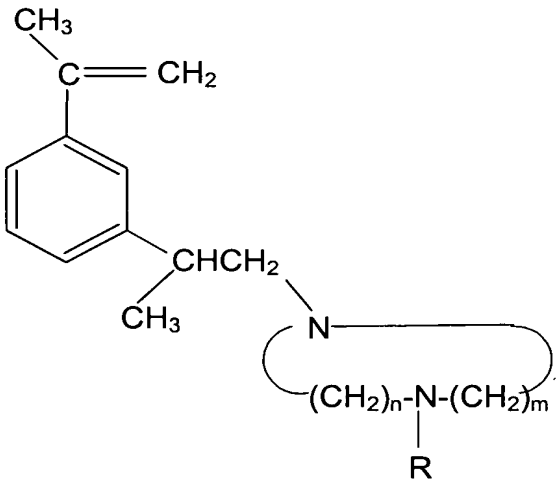
(d)



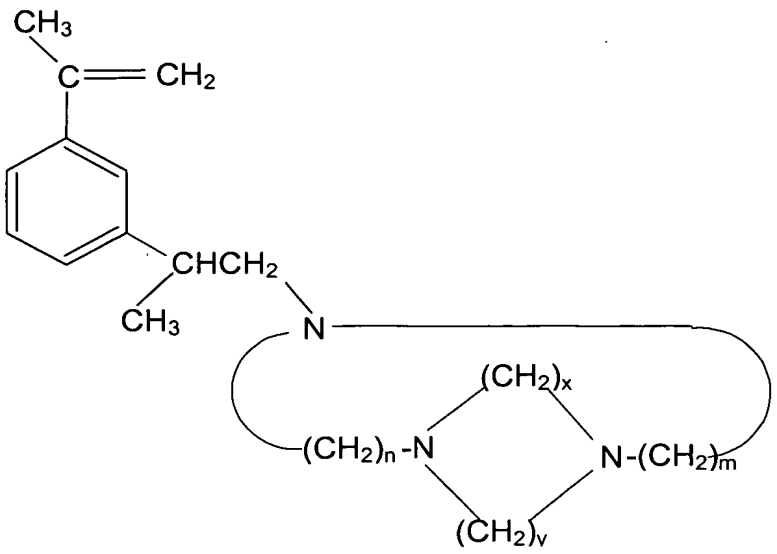
wherein n represents an integer from 1 to about 10 and wherein m represents an integer from 4 to about 10;

(e) 

wherein x represents an integer from about 1 to about 10, wherein n represents an integer from 0 to about 10 and wherein m represents an integer from 0 to about 10, with the proviso that the sum of n and m is at least 4;

(f) 

wherein R represents a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group containing from 1 to about 10 carbon atoms, wherein n represents an integer from 0 to about 10, and wherein m represents an integer from 0 to about 10, with the proviso that the sum of n and m is at least 4; and

(g) 

wherein n represents an integer from 0 to about 10, wherein m represents an integer from 0 to about 10, wherein x represents an integer from 1 to about 10, and wherein y represents an integer from 1 to about 10.

20. (New) A process as specified in claim 9 wherein the polymerization is initiated with an n-butyl lithium anionic initiator.

21. (New) A process as specified in claim 10 wherein the polymerization is initiated with an n-butyl lithium anionic initiator.

22. (New) A process as specified in claim 11 wherein the polymerization is initiated with an n-butyl lithium anionic initiator.

23. (New) A process as specified in claim 12 wherein the polymerization is initiated with an n-butyl lithium anionic initiator.

24. (New) A process as specified in claim 13 wherein the polymerization is initiated with an n-butyl lithium anionic initiator.